

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1 – 30. (Cancelled)

31. (Currently amended) A method for ensuring a connection to a configuration protocol server
on a data network by a customer premises equipment via a network connection, the method
comprising the steps of:

issuing a request for a customer premises equipment network address from the
customer premises equipment to the configuration protocol server via the network
connection;

the network connection determining whether a connection can be made to the
configuration protocol server, and if not, responding to the customer premises equipment by
sending a temporary network address and a lease time to the customer premises equipment,
whereby the lease time limits the time of validity of the temporary network address;

issuing a request to renew the temporary network address when the lease time
expires; and

the network connection determining whether a connection can be made to the
configuration protocol server, and if not, responding to the customer premises equipment by
sending an acknowledge message;

when the network connection determines that the connection can be made to the
configuration protocol, the network connection sending a NACK message declining to
acknowledge the request to renew the temporary network address;

the customer premises equipment receiving the NACK message and sending a
request for the customer premises equipment network address; and

the network connection communicating the request for the customer premises
equipment network address to the configuration protocol server.

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the network connection comprises a communications device for connecting the customer premises equipment to a local network, the local network being connected to the data network via a network interconnection device.

34. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in Claim 33, wherein ~~a temporary configuration server resides in the communications device~~ further comprises a temporary configuration server.

35. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in Claim 33, wherein ~~a temporary configuration server resides in the network interconnection device~~ further comprises a temporary configuration server.

36. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in Claim ~~32~~ 31, wherein the network connection comprises a communications device for connecting the customer premises equipment to a local network, the local network being connected to the data network via a network interconnection device.

37. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in Claim 36, wherein ~~a temporary configuration server resides in the communications device~~ further comprises a temporary configuration server.

38. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in Claim 36, wherein ~~a temporary configuration server resides in the network interconnection device~~ further comprises a temporary configuration server.

39. (Previously presented) A method for ensuring a connection to a configuration protocol server on a data network by a customer premises equipment via a network connection, the method comprising the steps of:

issuing a request for a customer premises equipment network address from the customer premises equipment to the configuration protocol server via the network connection;

the network connection determining whether a connection can be made to the configuration protocol server, and if not, responding to the customer premises equipment by sending a temporary network address and a lease time to the customer premises equipment, whereby the lease time limits the time of validity of the temporary network address;

issuing a request to renew the temporary network address when the lease time expires; and

the network connection determining whether a connection can be made to the configuration protocol server, and if not, responding to the customer premises equipment by sending an acknowledge message.

40. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 39, wherein the network connection comprises a communications device for connecting the customer premises equipment to a local network, the local network being connected to the data network via a network interconnection device.

41. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 40, wherein the communications device includes a cable modem, the local network includes a cable network and the network interconnection device includes a cable modem termination system.

42. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 39, wherein the configuration protocol server is a dynamic host configuration protocol (DHCP) server.

43. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 39, wherein the customer premises equipment network address used by the customer premises equipment is an Internet protocol (IP) address.

44. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 39, wherein the lease time is less than 10 seconds.

45. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 39, wherein the data network includes a connection to the Internet.

46. (Previously presented) A method for ensuring a connection to a configuration protocol server on a data network by a customer premises equipment via a network connection, the method comprising the steps of:

issuing a request for a customer premises equipment network address from the customer premises equipment to the configuration protocol server via the network connection;

the network connection determining whether a connection can be made to the configuration protocol server, and if not, responding to the customer premises equipment by sending a temporary network address and a lease time to the customer premises equipment, whereby the lease time limits the time of validity of the temporary network address;

issuing a request to renew the temporary network address when the lease time expires;

the network connection determining whether a connection can be made to the configuration protocol server, and if not, responding to the customer premises equipment by sending an acknowledge message;

when the network connection determines that the connection can be made to the configuration protocol, the network connection sending a NACK message declining to acknowledge the request to renew the temporary network address;

the customer premises equipment receiving the NACK message and sending a request for the customer premises equipment network address; and

the network connection communicating the request for the customer premises equipment network address to the configuration protocol server.

47. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 46, wherein the network connection comprises a communications device for connecting the customer premises equipment to a local network, the local network being connected to the data network via a network interconnection device.

48. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 47, wherein the communications device includes a cable modem, the local network includes a cable network and the network interconnection device includes a cable modem termination system.

49. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 46, wherein the configuration protocol server is a dynamic host configuration protocol (DHCP) server.

50. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 46, wherein the customer premises equipment network address used by the customer premises equipment is an Internet protocol (IP) address.

51. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 46, wherein the lease time is less than 10 seconds.

52. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 46, wherein the data network includes a connection to the Internet.